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PRESENTED AT THE GOLD MEDALLION BOOK AWARDS BANQUET
OF THE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN PUBLISHER'S ASSOCIATION

ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA

JULY 11, 1987

(GREETINGS TO HOSTS, GUESTS, FRIENDS, ETC.)

IT'S MY GREAT PLEASURE TO COME BEFORE YOU THIS EVENING TO RENEW AN OLD AND VALUED FRIENDSHIP WITH THE MEMBERS OF THIS ORGANIZATION AND TO SHARE MY THOUGHTS WITH YOU.

FIRST OF ALL, AND ON A PERSONAL LEVEL...AS AN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN MYSELF...I WANT TO THANK EACH ONE OF YOU FOR MAINTAINING A PLACE FOR CHRISTIAN PUBLISHING IN OUR SOCIETY.

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS...BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT IT'S EASY.

AMERICA IS A WONDERFUL COUNTRY...AND WHEN I TOOK THE POSITION OF SURGEON GENERAL I TOOK AN OATH TO UPHOLD OUR COUNTRY AND I DID SO WILLINGLY.

BUT YOU HAVE TO WONDER SOMETIMES WHY, IN THIS WONDERFUL COUNTRY OF OURS, IT'S SO TERRIBLY HARD TO BE GOOD...AND TO DO GOOD.

I KNOW THERE'S A MESSAGE THERE. AND I KNOW THAT THE MESSAGE HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE NEED TO INVEST OF YOURSELF...TO REALLY FEEL THE JOY AND TO FEEL THE HURT...WHEN YOU CARRY OUT ACTS OF LOVE AND CHARITY AND OF PEACE AND OF JUSTICE.

I KNOW THAT. STILL, TO LIVE AS SALT AND LIGHT REMAINS A GREAT CHALLENGE FOR A CHRISTIAN IN OUR SOCIETY. IN PUBLIC LIFE, IT'S THE COMMITMENT TO DECENCY IS UNDER THE CONSTANT SIEGE OF POWERFUL AND NEGATIVE FORCES IN OUR CULTURE:

- * TELEVISION SHOWS THAT GLAMORIZE VIOLENCE...
- * MOTION PICTURES THAT BRUTALIZE THE ACT OF LOVE...
- * NEWSPAPERS THAT SENSATIONALIZE HUMAN PAIN AND SORROW...
- * AND BOOK PUBLISHERS THAT SCANDALIZE THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

AS I SAY, I DON'T KNOW YOUR BUSINESS ALL THAT WELL...BUT I KNOW YOU'RE BETTER THAN THAT. AND, FOR MYSELF AND MILLIONS OF OTHER AMERICANS JUST LIKE ME, I WANT TO EXTEND MY THANKS.

YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN TOLD BY SEVERAL OF MY PREDECESSORS THAT, YES INDEED, THERE IS LIFE AFTER BEING SURGEON GENERAL. AND IN A COUPLE OF YEARS, WHEN THIS SECOND TERM IS OVER, I EXPECT TO PUT MY UNIFORM BACK IN THE CLOSET...AND NOT TAKE IT OUT AGAIN.

I'LL BE A PLAIN CITIZEN ONCE MORE, AND I INTEND TO SPEND SOME TIME CATCHING MY BREATH, COLLECTING MY THOUGHTS, AND GETTING RE-ACQUAINTED WITH MANY GOOD FRIENDS IN THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT... FRIENDS WHO HAVE SHOWN ME INFINITE LOVE AND PATIENCE THROUGH THESE TWO TERMS AS SURGEON GENERAL.

WE'VE HAD MANY SERIOUS MOMENTS TOGETHER OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.
WE'VE CONFRONTED THE PROFOUND MORAL AND ETHICAL QUESTIONS RAISED BY
"BABY DOE."

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY UNDERSTOOD MY STRUGGLE...AND SUPPORTED
ME.

AND TOGETHER...I KNOW WE WERE RIGHT.

WE CONFRONTED THE ISSUE OF PORNOGRAPHY IN AMERICAN LIFE. WE
DARED TO SPEAK AGAINST THE HARM THAT SUCH TRASH VISITS UPON THE HUMAN
SPIRIT.

AGAIN, WHEN OTHERS STEPPED BACK...YOU STEPPED FORWARD.

YOU UNDERSTOOD THE ISSUE...AND YOU SUPPORTED ME.

AND TOGETHER...WE WERE RIGHT.

THEY SAY THAT "A CLOSED MOUTH GATHERS NO FEET." I SUPPOSE THAT'S TRUE. CERTAINLY I'VE BEEN NO STRANGER TO CONTROVERSY...AND CONTROVERSY HAS BEEN NO STRANGER TO ME.

BUT I'VE BEEN BLESSED WITH GOOD FRIENDS, GOOD COLLEAGUES, AND A STRONG FAITH.

I'VE NEEDED ALL THREE. AND TODAY, I NEED THEM ALL MORE THAN EVER.

THE NEW ISSUE WE FACE...TOGETHER...IS THE ISSUE OF AIDS. WHAT IS IT? AND WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT IT?

SO MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN AND SAID ABOUT AIDS THAT I WON'T TAKE THE TIME TO GO OVER IT ALL AGAIN. INSTEAD, LET ME EMPHASIZE JUST A FEW KEY POINTS FROM MY OWN PERSPECTIVE AS YOUR SURGEON GENERAL.

FIRST, AIDS IS CAUSED BY A MYSTERIOUS VIRUS ABOUT WHICH WE STILL KNOW VERY LITTLE. IN FACT, IN THE COURSE OF THE PAST FIVE YEARS IT'S BEEN GIVEN MANY DIFFERENT NAMES. CURRENTLY IT'S CALLED THE "HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS," OR H.I.V.

BUT THE MYSTERY OF THE THING IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER. IT MEANS THAT WE MUST APPROACH EVERY ISSUE SURROUNDING AIDS WITH THE GREATEST CAUTION. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO MAKE SWEEPING, RADICAL DECISIONS, BECAUSE WE STILL DON'T KNOW HOW EXTENSIVE A PLAGUE WE HAVE UPON US AND HOW LONG IT MIGHT LAST.

THEREFORE, WE MUST MOVE FORWARD...BUT VERY CONSERVATIVELY. AND I DON'T MEAN THAT IN A POLITICAL SENSE AT ALL. I MEAN THAT IN A MANAGEMENT SENSE...MOVING WITH CARE...MAKING SOME NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS...BUT NOT PUTTING OUR FUNDAMENTAL VALUES AT RISK.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT SCIENCE -- ESPECIALLY SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY IN A FREE SOCIETY LIKE OURS -- WILL EVENTUALLY GET US OUT OF THIS AIDS MESS.

BUT I SHOULD SAY THAT IN THIS DISEASE, LIKE NO OTHER, SCIENCE AND MORALITY WALK HAND IN HAND AND SIDE BY SIDE TOWARD THE CONTAINMENT OF THE EPIDEMIC.

BUT MEANWHILE WE'RE STILL CONFRONTED BY THE MYSTERY OF THE THING.

THE SECOND POINT TO REMEMBER IS THAT AIDS IS A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE AND IT'S GROWING.

IN THE YEAR THAT ENDED ON JUNE 1, 1986, WE REPORTED 10,000 NEW CASES. BUT WITH THE YEAR THAT ENDED ON JUNE 1, 1987, WE HAD ADDED ALMOST 15,000 NEW CASES.

AT THIS RATE OF GROWTH, MY COLLEAGUES IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PREDICT THAT IN 1991 WE COULD ADD AS MANY AS 90,000 NEW PATIENTS TO THE ROLLS. THAT WOULD MEAN THAT, IN THE 10-YEAR HISTORY OF THIS DISEASE, A QUARTER OF A MILLION PEOPLE WILL HAVE CONTRACTED AIDS.

A THIRDPPOINT IS THAT THE DISEASE OF AIDS IS SPREADING GEOGRAPHICALLY, ALSO.

THERE WAS A TIME -- JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, IN FACT -- WHEN OUR CONCERNS ABOUT AIDS WERE CENTERED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN THE POPULATIONS MOST AT RISK, AND THEY WERE PRIMARILY HOMOSEXUAL AND BISEXUAL MEN IN SAN FRANCISCO, LOS ANGELES, AND NEW YORK CITY.

WHILE THESE THREE CITIES STILL HAVE THE HIGHEST NUMBERS OF AIDS CASES, THEY'RE NO LONGER ALONE. AT THE LATEST COUNT, 19 MAJOR CITIES HAVE EACH REPORTED MORE THAN 300 CASES OF AIDS SINCE 1981.

AND AS OF THIS YEAR, ONE OR MORE CASES HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN ALL 50 STATES, GUAM, THE TRUST TERRITORIES, AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

AT ONE TIME PEOPLE COULD SAY, "OH, AIDS...WELL, THAT'S THEIR PROBLEM, IT'S NOT OURS HERE IN SEATTLE, OR ATLANTA, OR BOSTON, OR SOUTH DAKOTA." BUT THE FACT IS...THE DISEASE HAS NOW SHOWED UP JUST ABOUT EVERYWHERE AND IT IS NOW EVERYBODY'S PROBLEM.

AS YOU KNOW, WE HAD A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE JUST LAST MONTH IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AND AT THAT TIME THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAD RECEIVED REPORTS OF OF OVER 50,000 AIDS CASES FROM 113 COUNTRIES...ICELAND, PARAGUAY, THE BAHAMAS...THE DISEASE IS NOW A "WORLD-CLASS" DISEASE.

IN SOME CENTRAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES AS MANY AS 11 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION ARE INFECTED WITH THE VIRUS. VILLAGES ARE DECIMATED. MANY FEAR THAT IN THE NEXT DECADE AND A HALF THERE WILL NOT BE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF YOUNG, EDUCATED, MEN AND WOMEN LEFT TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT, THE FACTORIES, AND THE BUSINESSES OF THESE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT BECAUSE I WANT TO RETURN TO IT IN A MOMENT.

MY FOURTH AND FOURTH FINAL POINT IS THAT THE DISEASE OF AIDS IS CONSIDERED TO BE 100 PERCENT FATAL. AND THAT'S THE FUNDAMENTAL REASON WE'RE SO WORRIED ABOUT IT.

IN ALL THE TALK ABOUT WHO HAS IT AND WHERE AND WHY, LET'S NOT OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT PEOPLE DIE OF IT. AND WE'RE DISCOVERING NOW THAT INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE DYING OF IT...UNSUSPECTING WIVES OF INFECTED MEN...THE NEWBORN BABIES OF INFECTED WOMEN...THESE ALSO ARE AMONG THE DEAD AND DYING.

WE FIRST BEGAN REPORTING CASES OF AIDS IN 1981. AS OF TODAY, ABOUT 90 PERCENT OF THOSE 1981 PATIENTS ARE DEAD...87 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE REPORTED IN 1982 ARE NOW DEAD...85 PERCENT OF THE 1983 PEOPLE...AND SO ON.

AIDS IS AN UGLY, RELENTLESS, AND LETHAL DISEASE. WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO FEAR ITS SPREAD.

BUT JUST HOW IS IT SPREAD?

IT'S SPREAD, AS JUST ABOUT THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS BY NOW, WHEN THE INFECTED BLOOD OR SEMEN FROM ONE PERSON ENTERS THE BODY OF ANOTHER. AND THAT HAPPENS MOST OFTEN DURING CERTAIN HIGH-RISK SEX PRACTICES ENGAGED IN BY HOMOSEXUALS AND BISEXUAL MEN...IT HAPPENS WHEN AN INFECTED DRUG ADDICT LOANS HIS CONTAMINATED NEEDLE TO ANOTHER ADDICT ...AND NOW WE DISCOVER THAT IT'S ALSO TRANSMITTED DURING HETEROSEXUAL INTERCOURSE AS WELL.

NOW, I AGREE THAT THE AIDS VIRUS IS PASSED ALONG BY PEOPLE WHO DO THINGS THAT WE THINK THEY SHOULDN'T DO IN THE FIRST PLACE.

I ABSOLUTELY DO NOT CONDONE INTRAVENOUS DRUG ABUSE AND I FLATLY OPPOSE THE KIND OF SEXUAL PROMISCUITY -- AMONG MEN AND WOMEN -- THAT ENDANGERS ANY PERSON'S PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH.

I THINK THAT KIND OF BEHAVIOR IS WRONG...WRONG ON PUBLIC HEALTH GROUNDS...AND WRONG ON MORAL GROUNDS.

BUT I'M NOT THE CHAPLAIN OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. I'M THEIR SURGEON GENERAL. IT'S MY JOB TO WAGE ALL-OUT WAR AGAINST DISEASE... AND NOT AGAINST PEOPLE. AND MY CONCERN HAS TO BE...AND IT MOST DEFINITELY IS...THE NEED TO STOP THE CHAIN OF TRANSMISSION OF THE AIDS VIRUS. WE MUST DO THAT IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY POSSIBLE, CONSISTENT WITH OUR LAWS AND TRADITIONS.

AND WE MUST DO THAT TO SAVE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WE KNOW AND DON'T KNOW...PEOPLE WE LIKE AND DON'T LIKE.

IT IS ESSENTIAL, THEREFORE, THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE THREAT POSED TO THEM BY THIS DISEASE AND ARE, THEMSELVES, READY TO FIGHT BACK WITH THE BEST AND ONLY WEAPON THAT'S AVAILABLE: THEIR INTELLIGENT BEHAVIOR.

AND FOR THAT, OF COURSE, WE NEED TO MATCH UP THE BEST SCIENCE WE HAVE WITH THE BEST EDUCATION WE CAN CARRY OUT FOR THE SAKE OF ALL AMERICANS.

NOBODY OBJECTS TO THAT NOTION. BUT THERE ARE SOME HONEST DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ABOUT THE AGE OF THE AMERICANS WE WANT TO EDUCATE.

FROM A PUBLIC HEALTH POINT OF VIEW, I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT WE NEED TO TELL CHILDREN AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE REAL WORLD OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SELF-RESPECT.

WITH THAT AS A FOUNDATION, WE NEED TO GO ON TO INTRODUCE THEM TO THE MIRACLES OF THEIR OWN BIOLOGY AND THEIR OWN SEXUALITY.

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT HUMAN CARING AND LOVE AND MUTUAL RESPECT.

I'LL TELL YOU MY "BIASES" RIGHT NOW. I DON'T HIDE THEM. HERE'S WHAT THEY ARE:

I'M "BIASED" ENOUGH TO THINK THAT A CHILD WHO THINKS WELL OF HIMSELF WHEN HE'S A LITTLE BOY...WHO IS TAUGHT TO DO NO HARM TO ANOTHER PERSON...AND WHO IS ALSO TAUGHT TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS OWN ACTIONS...WILL NOT GET AIDS WHEN HE GROWS UP.

AND I HAPPEN TO BE "BIASED" ABOUT LITTLE GIRLS IN THE SAME WAY. IF A LITTLE GIRL IS TAUGHT TO RESPECT HERSELF AS A MIRACLE OF CREATION, AND TO RESPECT AND CHERISH HER ABILITY TO LOVE ANOTHER HUMAN BEING AND, IN SO DOING, ENRICH THE HUMAN RACE WITH ANOTHER LIKE HERSELF...THEN I BELIEVE THAT LITTLE GIRL WILL GROW UP AND NOT BE PREGNANT AT 15...WILL NOT CONTRACT SYPHILLIS AT 19... AND WILL NOT BE DEAD OF AIDS AT 25.

AND I TRULY BELIEVE THAT, ALSO.

THEN, WHERE IS THE ARGUMENT? IT COMES WHEN YOU TRY TO DECIDE AT WHAT AGE TO TEACH THIS OR THAT TO A CHILD.

I PERSONALLY THINK YOU SHOULD START TEACHING IMPORTANT CONCEPTS TO A CHILD AT THE EARLIEST DEVELOPMENTAL AGE AT WHICH SHE OR HE CAN HANDLE THEM.

BUT THAT OPINION IS EXACTLY THAT: IT'S MY OPINION AND I'VE ALWAYS ADVERTISED IT AS SUCH.

SO LET ME STATE AGAIN WHAT I ALSO FIRMLY BELIEVE. I BELIEVE THAT THE EDUCATIONAL QUESTIONS REGARDING WHAT? AND WHEN? AND TO WHOM? OUGHT TO BE ANSWERED BY EACH FAMILY AND BY LOCAL SCHOOL PEOPLE. THAT'S HOW WE DO THINGS IN THIS COUNTRY.

IF A SET OF PARENTS IS TELLING THEIR CHILD ABOUT WHAT IS RIGHT AND WRONG ABOUT SEXUALITY IN THEIR FAMILY AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE SCHOOL IS TELLING THEIR CHILD THE SAME THING, THAT IS REINFORCEMENT.

IF THE SCHOOL, THEN, IS TEACHING SEXUALITY IN THE FAMILY CONTEXT AND ENUCIATING KIND, CARING, CONSIDERATE, LOVING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS, THAT IS FURTHER REINFORCEMENT.

AND I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IF WE ALL GET TOGETHER ON THIS AND STOP BICKERING, WE CAN RAISE A GENERATION OF PREADOLESCENTS WHO WILL ENTER THE ADOLESCENT PHASE, BECOME ABSTINENT UNTIL MONOGAMOUS. THAT'S THE WAY IT USED TO BE AND I DON'T THINK IT'S TOO MUCH TO ASK AGAIN.

LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I TOLD THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS BROADCASTERS AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR.

I TOLD THEM THAT ONE OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE FACED IS THAT OF HOMOSEXUALITY. YOU CAN'T AVOID IT, IF YOU ARE GOING TO DISCUSS AIDS.

IF YOU REGARD HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR AS SIN, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ONE OF YOUR FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS HAS ALSO BEEN TO "SEPARATE THE SIN FROM THE SINNER."

YOU MAY HATE THE SIN...BUT YOU ARE TO LOVE THE SINNER.

ANOTHER ISSUE THAT YOU MUST FACE IS THAT THERE WILL BE A GROWING NUMBER OF PEOPLE INFECTED BY THE AIDS VIRUS AND DYING, NOT THROUGH ANY DECISION THEY THEMSELVES MADE THAT COULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED IMPROPER.

WHO ARE THEY? THEY ARE... THE WIVES OF BISEXUAL MEN...

THEY ARE THE SPOUSES OF I.V. DRUG ABUSERS...

THEY'RE THE WIVES AND HUSBANDS OF PROMISCUOUS SPOUSES.

AND I'M AFRAID WE MUST ALSO COUNT THE BABIES BORN TO WOMEN WHO CARRY THE VIRUS. IN ADDITION TO BEING BORN THIS WAY, THEY ARE FREQUENTLY ABANDONED AND DIE ALONE IN HOSPITAL NURSERIES. THEY ARE THE MOST INNOCENT VICTIMS OF ALL.

BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET PEOPLE OFF THE HOOK, IF THEY SAY, "LOOK HERE, EDUCATION IS OUR BUSINESS"...AND THEN THEY DON'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT FOR WHATEVER REASON.

THAT'S TERRIBLE, BECAUSE RIGHT NOW EDUCATION IS OUR ONLY WEAPON AGAINST AIDS.

WE HAVE NO PILLS, NO VACCINES, NO DRUGS, NO OTHER WEAPON OF ANY KIND AGAINST AIDS...NOTHING EXCEPT THE WEAPON OF CHANGED BEHAVIOR, AND THAT'S A JOB FOR EDUCATION.

IN THIS CASE, AS IN SO MANY OTHERS, EDUCATION CAN SAVE LIVES. AND HERE AGAIN, AS IN THE CASE OF "BABY DOE" AND ORGAN TRANSPLANTS AND SO ON, I MUST COME DOWN ON THE SIDE OF DOING WHATEVER I CAN TO SAVE HUMAN LIFE.

AND SO I'M ASKING EVERY AMERICAN...AND I'M ASKING EACH ONE OF YOU HERE THIS EVENING...TO JOIN ME IN THIS FUNDAMENTALLY MORAL CRUSADE AGAINST A BRUTAL, HUMILIATING, AND FATAL DISEASE.

YOU, AS CHRISTIANS, WILL CONTINUE TO BE TESTED BY TREMENDOUS QUESTIONS THAT ARISE FROM THE TURMOIL OF CURRENT EVENTS. THESE QUESTIONS MAKE YOU EXAMINE AND RE-EXAMINE WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU STAND FOR.

THIS IS NOT AN AGE FOR THE FAINT OF HEART...OR OF SOUL.

ON THAT DAY, WHEN AIDS INTRUDES ON SOME ASPECT OF YOUR OWN LIFE, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE SICK AND THE DYING REQUIRE OUR CARE AND OUR COMPASSION, NO MATTER HOW THE ILLNESS WAS CONTRACTED.

THE WORLDWIDE PANDEMIC OF AIDS PRESENTS A CHALLENGE TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH THAT MAY NEVER HAVE EXISTED BEFORE IN QUITE THE SAME WAY. FIRST, THERE IS EVANGELISM.

AIDS PATIENTS, LIKE LEPROSY PATIENTS OF YESTERYEAR, ARE ABANDONED BY FAMILIES, SHUNNED BY SOCIETY, AND ARE MANY TIMES THE VICTIMS OF UNWARRANTED ABUSE. WHAT BETTER EVANGELISTIC TARGET THAN THE SICK, THE DYING, THE HOMELESS, THE ABANDONED, AND THE DEPISED.

THE EVANGELISTIC OPPORTUNITY DOESN'T EXIST ONLY IN YOUR BACKYARD EITHER. THERE IS A NEW AND RIPE MISSION FIELD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND PARTICULARLY IN DEVELOPING NATIONS AND MOST PARTICULARLY ON CENTRAL AFRICA

AT THE MENGO HOSPITAL IN KUMPALA, UGANDA, FOUNDED BY DAVID LIVINGSTON IN THE BEGINNING OF THAT GREAT SURGE OF AFRICAN FOREIGN MISSION, THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE WITHOUT NUMBER, THE DIAGNOSIS IS AIDS.

AND FINALLY, WHAT BETTER OF A CHRISTIAN WITNESS IS THERE THAN THE ACTS OF LOVE AND COMPASSION THAT COULD MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TERMINAL ILLNESS THAT IS TOLERABLE AND ONE THAT IS INTOLERABLE?

NOW, YOU'VE BEEN A VERY GOOD AND PATIENT AUDIENCE AND NOW I WILL CLOSE MY REMARKS WITH A LITTLE PERSONAL RECOLLECTION.

A FEW YEARS AGO, FRANCIS SCHAEFFER AND I WERE TOURING THE COUNTRY, SPEAKING OUT AGAINST ABORTION AND PRESENTING OUR FILM, "WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE HUMAN RACE."

I CAN TELL YOU THAT WE WERE FREQUENTLY VERY DISCOURAGED BY THE RESPONSE OF MANY EVANGELICALS. THEY DREW THEIR SKIRTS ABOUT THEM AND SHUNNED THE ISSUE OF ABORTION.

IN DUE TIME, HOWEVER, THEY CAME AROUND AND HAVE BECOME ACTIVISTS IN THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT. BUT UNTIL THEY DID, MANY THOUSANDS OF LIVES WERE NEEDLESSLY LOST.

MY PLEA TO YOU TODAY IS NOT TO REPEAT THAT SLICE OF HISTORY. I ASK THAT YOU, WHO BEST UNDERSTAND THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST, SHOW YOUR LOVE AND CONCERN FOR THE VICTIMS OF THIS TERRIBLE DISEASE AND GIVE YOUR SUPPORT -- NOW -- TO EFFORTS TO EDUCATE OUR PEOPLE ABOUT THIS DISEASE, ESPECIALLY OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

EDUCATION...EDUCATION...EDUCATION. AT THIS POINT IN TIME, EDUCATION IS OUR ONLY WEAPON AGAINST THIS DREADFUL DISEASE. WITH YOUR HELP, IT CAN ALSO BE THE STRONGEST WEAPON WE HAVE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT IN THE YEARS AHEAD, AS IN THE YEARS PAST...AND GOD BLESS EACH ONE OF YOU.

THANK YOU.

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